

Tales Of Elva Farnum

Strange that I didn't own sunglasses
In those days

Sitting on the step with Jim
With me watching the pond
And Jim not even looking at it
And the sun beaming down
On me wearing my straw hat
And Jim not wearing a hat at all

And when I could get him to put down
"Sgt. Rock & Easy Co."
We looked at each other
And laughed
With tales of Elva Farnum
And the Mills queers
Until absurd with joy
We raided the refrigerator
For ice cream with sauce

And after numbing our laughers
We went up to the road
And bounced the hardball

Up there I didn't have to watch the pond
And Jim didn't have to not look at it

-- Benjamin S. Blake

Willimantic CT

Empathy

Events, if they are remote and terrible enough, resonate at frequencies too high for human reception. Those catastrophic earthquakes, for example, which always occur in Diyarbakir or Quetta, places that have never really existed. Then too, if it had not been fifty-thousand victims, but only four victims, or nineteen -- some human figure.

A moment ago, a short walk from where I sit, I was confronted by a chilling sight: a tortured praying mantis wriggling helplessly in the fingers of an amused child.